

**Title 23**  
**CODE COMPLIANCE**

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**Chapter 23.01**  
**NAME AND PURPOSE**

**Sections:**

- 23.01.010 Name and purpose.
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**23.01.010 Name and purpose.**

A. This title shall be known as "Code Compliance". The purpose of this title is to identify processes and methods to encourage compliance with county laws and regulations that King County has adopted pursuant to Article XI, Section 11 of the Washington Constitution and other state laws to promote and protect the general public health, safety and environment of county residents. This title declares certain acts to be civil violations and establishes non-penal enforcement procedures and civil penalties. This title also declares certain acts to be misdemeanors.

B. It is the intention of the county to pursue code compliance actively and vigorously in order to protect the health, safety and welfare of the general public. This county intention is to be pursued in a way that is consistent with adherence to, and respectful of, fundamental constitutional principles.

C. While this title does authorize King County to take action to enforce county laws and regulations, it shall not be construed as placing responsibility for code compliance or enforcement upon King County in any particular case, or as creating any duty on the part of King County to any particular person or class of persons. (Ord. 13263 § 1, 1998).

**23.01.020 Statement of goals.** It is the policy of King County to emphasize code compliance by education and prevention as a first step. This policy is designed to ensure code compliance and timely action that is available to all persons and uniform in its implementation. While warnings and voluntary compliance are desirable as a first step, enforcement and civil penalties should be used for remedial purposes as needed to assure and effect code compliance. Abatement or remediation should be pursued when appropriate and feasible. Uniform and efficient procedures, with consistent application tailored by regulation to each department's mission, should be used to accomplish these goals. (Ord. 13263 § 2, 1998).

## Chapter 23.02 GENERAL PROVISIONS

### Sections:

- 23.02.010 Definitions.
- 23.02.020 Relationship to growth management plan.
- 23.02.030 Declaration of public nuisance, misdemeanor.
- 23.02.040 Enforcement authority and administration.
- 23.02.050 Guidelines for departmental responses to complaints.
- 23.02.060 Initial investigation.
- 23.02.070 Procedures when probable violation identified.
- 23.02.080 Service - citation, notice and order and stop work order.
- 23.02.090 Voluntary compliance agreement authority.
- 23.02.100 Failure to meet terms of voluntary compliance agreement.
- 23.02.110 Right of entry.
- 23.02.120 Training and rulemaking.
- 23.02.130 Obligations of persons responsible for code compliance.

**23.02.010 Definitions.** The words and phrases designated in this section shall be defined for the purposes of this title as follows:

A. "Abate" means to take whatever steps are deemed necessary by the director to return a property to the condition in which it existed before a civil code violation occurred or to assure that the property complies with applicable code requirements. Abatement may include, but is not limited to, rehabilitation, demolition, removal, replacement or repair.

B. "Civil code violation" means and includes one or more of the following:

1. Any act or omission contrary to any ordinance, resolution, regulation or public rule of the county that regulates or protects the public health or the use and development of land or water, whether or not the ordinance, resolution or regulation is codified; and

2. Any act or omission contrary to the conditions of any permit, notice and order or stop work order issued pursuant to any such an ordinance, resolution, regulation or public rule.

C. "Director" means, depending on the code violated:

- 1. The director of the department of development and environmental services;
- 2. The director of the Seattle-King County department of public health (the "local health officer" as that term is used in chapter 70.05 RCW);
- 3. The director of the department of natural resources and parks;
- 4. The director of any other county department authorized to enforce civil code compliance;
- 5. Authorized representatives of a director, including but not limited to, the compliance officers and inspectors whose responsibility includes the detection and reporting of civil code violations; or
- 6. Such other person as the council by ordinance authorizes to utilize this title.

D. "Hearing examiner" means the King County hearing examiner, as provided in K.C.C. chapter 20.24.

E. "Mitigate" means to take measures, subject to county approval, to minimize the harmful effects of the violation where remediation is either impossible or unreasonably burdensome.

F. "Permit" means any form of certificate, approval, registration, license or any other written permission issued by King County. All conditions of approval, and all easements and use limitations shown on the face of an approved final plat map which are intended to serve or protect the general public are deemed conditions applicable to all subsequent plat property owners and their tenants and agents as permit requirements enforceable under this title.

G. "Person" means any individual, association, partnership, corporation or legal entity, public or private, and the agents and assigns of the individual, association, partnership, corporation or legal entity.

H. "Person responsible for code compliance" means either the person who caused the violation, if that can be determined, or the owner, lessor, tenant or other person entitled to control, use or occupy, or any combination of control, use or occupy, property where a civil code violation occurs, or both

I. "Remediate" means to restore a site to a condition that complies with sensitive area or other regulatory requirements as they existed when the violation occurred; or, for sites that have been degraded under prior ownerships, restore to a condition that does not pose a probable threat to the environment or to the public health, safety or welfare.

J. "Resolution" means any law enacted by resolution of the board of county commissioners prior to the establishment of the charter, or any health rule adopted by resolution of the board of health.

K. "Public rule" means any rule properly promulgated to implement code provisions. (Ord. 14309 § 1, 2002: Ord. 14199 § 246, 2001: Ord. 13263 § 3, 1998).

**23.02.020 Relationship to growth management plan.** Ordinance 11622 and K.C.C. Titles 7 (Parks and Recreation), 23 (Enforcement), and 25 (Shorelines) are adopted as development regulations pursuant to chapter 36.70A RCW (Growth Management Act). (Ord. 11622 § 1, 1994).

**23.02.030 Declaration of public nuisance, misdemeanor.** A. All civil code violations are hereby determined to be detrimental to the public health, safety and environment and are hereby declared public nuisances. All conditions determined to be civil code violations shall be subject to and enforced pursuant to the provisions of this title except where specifically excluded by law or regulation.

B. Any person who willfully or knowingly causes, aids or abets a civil code violation pursuant to this title by any act of commission or omission is guilty of a misdemeanor. Upon conviction, the person shall be punished by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars and/or imprisonment in the county jail for a term not to exceed ninety days. Each week (seven days) such violation continues shall be considered a separate misdemeanor offense. As an alternative, or in addition to any other judicial or administrative remedy provided in this title or by law or other regulation, a director may request that the prosecuting attorney consider filing a misdemeanor complaint against the persons responsible for code compliance when the director has documentation or evidence that the violation was willful and knowing. (Ord. 13263 § 4, 1998).

**23.02.040 Enforcement authority and administration.**

A. In order to discourage public nuisances and otherwise promote compliance with applicable code provisions, a director may, in response to field observations or reliable complaints, determine that civil code violations have occurred or are occurring and may:

1. Enter into voluntary compliance agreements with persons responsible for code compliance;
2. Issue citations and assess civil penalties as authorized by K.C.C. chapter 23.20.
3. Issue notice and orders, assess civil penalties and fines and recover costs as authorized by K.C.C. chapter 23.24;
4. Order abatement by means of a notice and order, and if such abatement is not timely completed by the person responsible for code compliance, undertake the abatement and charge the reasonable costs of such work as authorized by K.C.C. chapter 23.24;
5. Allow a person responsible for code compliance to perform community service in lieu of paying civil penalties as authorized by K.C.C. chapter 23.24;
6. Order work stopped at a site by means of a stop work order, and if such order is not complied with, assess civil penalties, as authorized by K.C.C. chapter 23.28; and/or
7. Suspend, revoke or modify any permit previously issued by a director or deny a permit application as authorized by K.C.C. chapter 23.24 when other efforts to achieve compliance have failed.

B. Should violations occur involving multiple agencies, a lead agency shall be designated by the executive to coordinate the county's response. Unless otherwise determined by the directors of the affected departments, the department of development and environmental services shall serve as the lead agency.

C. The procedures set forth in this title are not exclusive. These procedures shall not in any manner limit or restrict the county from remedying civil code violations or abating civil code violations in any other manner authorized by law. Ordinance 13263 shall not be construed to affect the authority of the King County board of health in enforcement of the King County board of health code or regulations.

D. In addition or as an alternative to utilizing the procedures set forth in this title, a director may seek legal or equitable relief to abate any conditions or enjoin any acts or practices which constitute a civil code violation.

E. In addition or as an alternative to utilizing the procedures set forth in Ordinance 13263, a director may assess or recover civil penalties accruing under this title by legal action filed in King County superior court by the prosecuting attorney on behalf of King County.

F. The provisions of this title shall in no way adversely affect the rights of the owner, lessee or occupant of any property to recover all costs and expenses incurred and required by this title from any person causing such violation.

G. A director may use the services of a collection agency in order to collect any fines, penalties, fees or costs owing under this title.

H. In administering the provisions for code enforcement, the director shall have the authority to waive any one or more such provisions so as to avoid substantial injustice by application thereof to the acts or omissions of a public or private entity or individual, or acts or omissions on public or private property including, for example, property belonging to public or private utilities, where no apparent benefit has accrued to such entity or individual from a code violation and any necessary remediation is being promptly provided. For purposes of this clause, substantial injustice cannot be based on economic hardship.

I. The provisions of this title detailing county department administration of code compliance procedures are intended only for the purpose of providing guidance to county employees and are not to be construed as creating a basis for appeal or a defense of any kind to an alleged violation.

J. The provisions of Ordinance 13263 authorizing the enforcement of non-codified ordinances are intended to assure compliance with conditions of approval on plats, unclassified use permits, zone reclassifications and other similar permits or approvals which may have been granted by ordinances which have not been codified, and to enforce new regulatory ordinances which are not yet codified. Departments should be sensitive to the possibility that citizens may not be aware of these ordinances, and should give warnings prior to enforcing such ordinances, except in high risk cases. (Ord. 13263 § 5, 1998).

**23.02.050 Guidelines for departmental responses to complaints.**

A. The following guidelines should be applied by the departments, subject to departmental resource limitations, when responding to code compliance complaints. The timelines identified below may be modified by departmental rule, subject to council review and approval.

1. High risk investigations needing an urgent response (within twenty-four hours to one week) include any cases in which:

a. there is an imminent likelihood of or actual bodily harm, damage to public resources or facilities, damage to real or personal property, public health exposure, or environmental damage or contamination; or

b. the sites and/or persons responsible for code compliance have a history of prior high or moderate risk violations.

2. Moderate risk investigations needing a prompt response (within seventy-two hours to ten days) include cases where:

a. there is risk of bodily harm, damage to public resources and/or facilities, damage to real or personal property, or environmental damage or contamination; or

b. the subject sites and/or persons responsible for code compliance have a history of prior low risk violations; or

c. there are ongoing moderate or low risk violations; or

d. more than five wrecked, dismantled or inoperative vehicles are found.

3. Low risk investigations needing response as time permits (within two to four weeks of violation being identified by code compliance staff) include cases where:

a. the violation is non-emergent, does not fit within the high risk or moderate risk categories and has only minor public impacts; and

b. the violation is an isolated incident.

B. The response times set out in this section are not jurisdictional, and failure to meet them in any particular case shall not affect the county's authority to enforce county code provisions with regard to that case. (Ord. 13263 § 6, 1998).

**23.02.060 Initial investigation.** This section sets forth guidelines for more specific procedures to be used by each department in implementing Ordinance 13263. The guidelines set forth in this section are not jurisdictional, and failure to meet them in any particular case shall not affect the county's authority to enforce county code provisions with regard to that case.

**A. Field verification.**

Except in emergencies and for low risk case complaints, field verification should be made if possible prior to, concurrent with or shortly after notifying the owner, occupant, and/or other person responsible for code compliance of the potential or alleged violation. Low risk case complaints should be acknowledged by sending an informal letter to the person(s) responsible for code compliance. The letter should state that a violation may have occurred, but has not been verified, and should ask the recipient to contact the department issuing the letter.

**B. Advising interested parties of receipt of complaint and/or field investigation.**

1. The owner, occupant and person responsible for code compliance (if not an owner or occupant) should be advised of any complaint by personal contact, phone, posting and/or mail.

2. The complainant should be contacted by phone and, if possible, in person during the field visit.

C. To the extent possible, all departments with compliance requirement authority should record land-based violations in a database system, which should be accessible to all other departments.

D. To the extent possible, the department shall check its own records and the records of other agencies for previous violations on the site of the alleged violation or by the owner or occupant of the site or such other person as may be responsible for code compliance. Each department should develop and/or maintain a database system for tracking violations of its codes that is designed, to the extent possible, to be used in coordination with other departments.

E. Staff undertaking field investigations shall comply with the provisions of this title regarding right of entry. (Ord. 13263 § 7, 1998).

**23.02.070 Procedures when probable violation identified.**

A. The department shall determine, based on information derived from sources such as field observations, the statements of witnesses, relevant documents and data systems for tracking violations and applicable county codes, whether or not a violation has occurred. As soon as a department has reasonable cause to determine that a violation has occurred, it shall document the violation and promptly notify the owner, occupant or other person responsible for code compliance.

B. Except as provided in subsection D of this section, a warning shall be issued verbally or in writing promptly when a field inspection reveals a violation, or as soon as the department otherwise determines that a violation has occurred. The warning shall inform the person determined to be responsible for code compliance of the violation and allow the person an opportunity to correct it or enter into a voluntary compliance agreement as provided for by this title. Verbal warnings shall be logged and followed up with a written warning within two weeks, and the site shall be reinspected within thirty days.

C. The guidelines in this section for warnings, notifications and re-inspections are not jurisdictional, and failure to meet them in any particular case shall not affect the county's authority to enforce county code provisions with regard to that case.



D. No warning need be issued in high-risk cases, emergencies, repeat violation cases, cases that are already subject to a voluntary compliance agreement, cases in which the violation creates a situation or condition that is not likely to be corrected within a short period of time, cases in which a stop work order is necessary, or if the person responsible for code compliance knows or reasonably should have known that the action was a civil code violation.

E. Citations may be issued in moderate- and low-risk cases, if the department determines it is probable that violation can likely be fully corrected in a short period of time.

F. Notice and orders should be issued in all high-risk cases in which a voluntary compliance agreement has not been entered into. Notice and orders may be issued in moderate- and low-risk cases where the department determines that the violation is unlikely be fully corrected in a short period of time.

G. The department shall use all reasonable means to determine and cite the person or persons actually responsible for the violation occurring when the owner has not directly or indirectly caused the violation.

H. If the violation is not corrected or a voluntary compliance agreement is not achieved within a reasonable time period, a citation, notice and order or stop work order should be issued. As a guideline, citations should be issued within sixty days from receipt of a complaint, and notice and orders should be issued within one hundred twenty days from receipt of a complaint. Stop work orders should be issued promptly upon discovery of a violation in progress.

I. Any complainant who provides a mailing address and requests to be kept advised of enforcement efforts should be mailed a copy of all written warnings, voluntary compliance agreements, citations, notice and orders, stop work orders and notices of settlement conferences issued by a department with regard to the alleged violation. Any complainant who is an aggrieved person may appeal a citation, notice and order, stop work order, a determination to enter into a voluntary compliance agreement or a determination not to issue a citation or order pursuant to the provisions of K.C.C. chapter 20.24, provided that the appeal shall be considered a civil proceeding, and any decision to pursue criminal sanctions shall remain the obligation of the prosecuting attorney, as set out in K.C.C. 23.02.030. (Ord. 14309 § 2, 2002; Ord. 13263 § 8, 1998).

#### **23.02.080 Service - citation, notice and order, and stop work order.**

A. Service of a citation or notice and order shall be made on a person responsible for code compliance by one or more of the following methods:

1. Personal service of a citation or notice and order may be made on the person identified by the department as being responsible for code compliance, or by leaving a copy of the citation or notice and order at that person's house of usual abode with a person of suitable age and discretion who resides there.

2. Service directed to the landowner and/or occupant of the property may be made by posting the citation or notice and order in a conspicuous place on the property where the violation occurred and concurrently mailing notice as provided for below, if a mailing address is available.

3. Service by mail may be made for a citation or a notice and order by mailing two copies, postage prepaid, one by ordinary first class mail and the other by certified mail, to the person responsible for code compliance at his or her last known address, at the address of the violation, or at the address of the place of business of the person responsible for code compliance. The taxpayer's address as shown on the tax records of the county shall be deemed to be the proper address for the purpose of mailing such notice to the landowner of the property where the violation occurred. Service by mail shall be presumed effective upon the third business day following the day upon which the citation or notice and order was placed in the mail.

B. For notice and orders only, when the address of the person responsible for code compliance cannot reasonably be determined, service may be made by publication once in a local newspaper with general circulation.

C. Service of a stop work order on a person responsible for code compliance may be made by posting the stop work order in a conspicuous place on the property where the violation occurred or by serving the stop work order in any other manner permitted by this section.

D. The failure of the director to make or attempt service on any person named in the citation, notice and order or stop work order shall not invalidate any proceedings as to any other person duly served. (Ord. 13263 § 9, 1998).

**23.02.090 Voluntary compliance agreement - authority.**

A. Whenever the applicable department determines that a code violation has occurred or is occurring, the department shall make reasonable efforts to secure voluntary compliance from the person responsible for code compliance. Upon contacting the person responsible for code compliance, the department may enter into a voluntary compliance agreement as provided for in this section.

B. A voluntary compliance agreement may be entered into at any time after issuance of a verbal or written warning, a citation, a notice and order or a stop work order and before an appeal is decided pursuant to K.C.C. chapter 20.24.

C. The voluntary compliance agreement is a commitment by the person responsible for code compliance under which the person agrees to do any combination of abating the violation, remediating the site or mitigating the impacts of the violation. The voluntary compliance agreement shall include the following:

1. The name and address of the person responsible for code compliance;
2. The address or other identification of the location of the violation;
3. A description of the violation and a reference to the provision or provisions of the ordinance, resolution or regulation that has been violated;
4. A description of the necessary corrective action to be taken and identification of the date or time by which compliance must be completed. For the purpose of this subsection C.4, the department may either require that compliance be achieved by a specific date or that compliance be achieved by a date to be determined based on the occurrence of some future event;
5. The amount of the civil penalty that will be imposed pursuant to K.C.C. chapter 23.32 if the voluntary compliance agreement is not satisfied;
6. An acknowledgment that the voluntary compliance agreement will be recorded against the property in the office of records and elections, the recording to be accomplished as provided for in notice and order cases;
7. An acknowledgment that if the department determines that the terms of the voluntary compliance agreement are not met, the county may, without issuing a citation, notice and order or stop work order, impose any remedy authorized by this title, which includes the assessment of the civil penalties identified in the voluntary compliance agreement, abatement of the violation, assessment of the costs incurred by the county to pursue code compliance and to abate the violation, including legal and incidental expenses, and the suspension, revocation or limitation of a development permit;

8. An acknowledgment that if any assessed penalty, fee or cost is not paid, a director may charge the unpaid amount as a lien against the property where the civil code violation occurred if owned by the person responsible for code compliance, and that the unpaid amount may be a joint and several personal obligation of all persons responsible for code compliance;

9. An acknowledgment that by entering into the voluntary compliance agreement the person responsible for code compliance waives the right to administratively appeal, and thereby admits, that the conditions described in the voluntary compliance agreement existed and constituted a civil code violation; and that if the department determines the terms of the voluntary compliance agreement are not met, the person is subject to and liable for any remedy authorized by this title, which includes the assessment of the civil penalties identified in the voluntary compliance agreement, abatement of the violation, assessment of the costs incurred by the county to pursue code compliance and to abate the violation, including legal and incidental expenses, and the suspension, revocation or limitation of a development permit; and

10. An acknowledgment that the person responsible for code compliance understands that he or she has the right to be served with a citation, notice and order or stop work order for any violation identified in the voluntary compliance agreement, has the right to administratively appeal any such a citation, notice and order or stop work order, and that he or she is knowingly, voluntarily and intelligently waiving those rights.

D. Upon entering into a voluntary compliance agreement, a person responsible for code compliance waives the right to administratively appeal, and thereby admits, that the conditions described in the voluntary compliance agreement existed and constituted a civil code violation; and agrees that if the department determines the terms of the voluntary compliance agreement are not met, he or she is liable for the civil penalty available under K.C.C. chapter 23.32 and identified in the voluntary compliance agreement, is liable for the costs incurred by the county to pursue code compliance and to abate the violation, including legal and incidental expenses as provided for in K.C.C. chapter 23.24 and is subject to all other remedies provided for in this title.

E. An extension of the time limit for compliance or a modification of the required corrective action may be granted by the department if the person responsible for code compliance has shown due diligence or substantial progress in correcting the violation, but circumstances render full and timely compliance under the original conditions unattainable.

F. The voluntary compliance agreement is not a settlement agreement. (Ord. 14309 § 3, 2002: Ord. 13263 § 10, 1998).

**23.02.100 Failure to meet terms of voluntary compliance agreement.** If the terms of the voluntary compliance agreement are not completely met, the department may abate the violation in accordance with this title, and the person responsible for code compliance may, without being issued a citation, notice and order or stop work order, be assessed a civil fine or penalty, in accordance with the penalty provisions of this title, plus all costs incurred by the county to pursue code compliance and to abate the violation, including legal and incidental expenses as provided for in this title, and may be subject to other remedies authorized by this title. Penalties imposed when a voluntary compliance agreement is not met accrue from the date that the terms of the voluntary compliance agreement were violated (Ord. 14309 § 4, 2002: Ord. 13263 § 11, 1998).

**23.02.110 Right of entry.** It is the intention of the council that any entry made to private property for the purpose of inspection for code violations be accomplished in strict conformity with constitutional and statutory constraints on entry, and the holdings of relevant court cases regarding entry. The right-of-entry granted by this title shall not supersede those legal constraints. The director is authorized to enter upon any property for the purpose of administering Ordinance 13263 provided that, the director shall make entry only if such entry is consistent with the constitutions and laws of the United States and the state of Washington. If so required by the constitutions and laws of the United States or the state of Washington, the director shall apply to a court of competent jurisdiction for a search warrant authorizing access to such property for such purpose. The court may upon such application issue the search warrant for the purpose requested. (Ord. 13263 § 12, 1998).

**23.02.120 Training and rulemaking.**

A. In order to ensure strict conformity with the constraints on entry imposed by state and federal law and to assure that county employees deal with the public in a manner which respects the rights of private property owners, the directors of the department of development and environmental services, natural resources and parks and other departments, as needed, shall develop and adopt internal procedures, protocols and training programs governing the conduct of searches by code compliance officers which shall be issued within nine months of the adoption of Ordinance 13263.

B. Each department operating under this chapter shall adopt procedures to implement the provisions of Ordinance 13263, and specifically the guidelines set out in this chapter describing reasonable and appropriate protocols for investigating code violations. (Ord. 14199 § 247, 2001: Ord. 13263 § 13, 1998).

**23.02.130 Obligations of persons responsible for code compliance.**

A. It shall be the responsibility of any person identified as responsible for code compliance to bring the property into a safe and reasonable condition to achieve code compliance. Payment of fines, applications for permits, acknowledgment of stop-work orders and compliance with other remedies does not substitute for performing the corrective work required and having the property brought into compliance to the extent reasonably possible under the circumstances.

B. Persons determined to be responsible for code compliance pursuant to a citation or notice and order shall be liable for the payment of any civil fines, penalties and abatement costs, provided, however, that if a property owner affirmatively demonstrates that the action which resulted in the violation was taken without the owner's knowledge or consent by someone other than the owner or someone acting on the owner's behalf, that owner shall be responsible only for bringing the property into compliance to the extent reasonably feasible under the circumstances. Should the owner not correct the violation, only those abatement costs necessary to bring the property into a safe and reasonable condition, as determined by the director, shall be assessed by the county. No civil fines or penalties shall be assessed against such an owner or his or her property interest. (Ord. 13263 § 14, 1998).

**Chapter 23.10**  
**ABANDONED, WRECKED, DISMANTLED OR INOPERATIVE VEHICLES**

**Sections:**

- 23.10.010 Purpose.
- 23.10.030 Certification.
- 23.10.040 Wrecked, dismantled or inoperative vehicles -- prohibited activity.
- 23.10.060 Notice required.
- 23.10.070 Determination of responsibility.
- 23.10.090 Abatement and removal authorized.
- 23.10.100 Costs of abatement and removal.
- 23.10.120 Photographic record.

**23.10.010 Purpose.** The purpose of this chapter is to establish procedures for the abatement and removal as public nuisances of abandoned, wrecked, dismantled or inoperative vehicles pursuant to RCW 46.55. (Ord. 12024 § 3, 1995).

**23.10.030 Certification.** Any enforcement officer of the department of development and environmental services may inspect and certify that a vehicle is a "wrecked, dismantled or inoperative vehicle or an abandoned vehicle" as those terms are defined in K.C.C. 21A. The certification shall be made in writing. (Ord. 12024 § 4, 1995).

**23.10.040 Wrecked, dismantled or inoperative vehicles -- prohibited activity.** No person may park, store or abandon a wrecked, dismantled or inoperative vehicle, or part thereof as those terms are defined in K.C.C. chapter 21A.06, on private property, except where the following conditions apply:

A. A vehicle or vehicle part is completely enclosed within a building in a lawful manner where it is not visible from the street or from other public or private property; or

B. A vehicle is stored or parked in a lawful manner on private property in connection with the business of a licensed dismantler or licensed vehicle dealer and is fenced as required by state law. (Ord. 14309 § 11, 2002: Ord. 12024 § 13, 1995).

**23.10.060 Notice required.**

A. Whenever a vehicle has been determined to be a wrecked, dismantled or inoperative vehicle or as an abandoned vehicle, the last registered vehicle owner of record and the land owner of record where the vehicle is located shall each be given notice by certified mail that a public hearing may be requested before the hearing examiner. If no hearing is requested within ten days from the certified date of receipt of the notice, the vehicle shall be removed by the county.

B. If a request for hearing is received within ten days, a notice giving the time, location and date of the hearing on the question of abatement and removal of the vehicle or vehicles shall be mailed by certified or registered mail, with five-day return receipt requested, to the land owner as shown on the last equalized assessment roll and to the last registered and legal owner of record of each vehicle unless the vehicle identification numbers are not available to determine ownership. (Ord. 14309 § 12, 2002: Ord. 12024 §§ 5 and 6, 1995).

**23.10.070 Determination of responsibility.**

A. The owner of the land on which the vehicle is located may appear in person at the hearing or present a written sworn statement in time for consideration at the hearing. The owner may deny responsibility for the presence of the vehicle on the land stating the reason for such denial. If it is determined by the hearing officer that the vehicle was placed on the land without consent of the land owner and that the land owner has not subsequently acquiesced in its presence, then costs of administration or removal of the vehicle shall not be assessed against the property upon which the vehicle is located nor otherwise be collected from the land owner.

B. Nothing in this chapter shall relieve the landowner of any civil penalties which may accrue from any zoning code violation related to the improper placement, parking or storage of vehicles or parts thereof to which the landowner has consented or acquiesced.

C. In addition to determination of responsibility as provided for in paragraph A, the hearing examiner shall receive and examine evidence on other relevant matters, including whether a public nuisance as defined in this chapter exists. The decision of the hearing examiner shall be final. Any further approval shall be as prescribed in K.C.C. 20.24.240B. (Ord. 12024 § 7, 1995).

**23.10.090 Abatement and removal authorized.** The county may remove any abandoned, wrecked, dismantled or inoperative vehicle, automobile hulk or part thereof, after complying with the notice requirements of this chapter. The proceeds of any such a disposition shall be used to defray the costs of abatement and removal of any such a vehicle, including costs of administration and enforcement. (Ord. 14309 § 13, 2002; Ord. 12024 § 8, 1995).

**23.10.100 Costs of abatement and removal.**

A. The costs of abatement and removal of any such vehicle or remnant part, including costs of administration and enforcement, shall be collected from the last registered vehicle owner if the identity of such owner can be determined, unless such owner in the transfer of ownership thereof has complied with RCW 46.12.101.

If the vehicle owner cannot be established, the costs of abatement and enforcement shall be collected from the land owner on which the vehicle or remnant part is located, unless the landowner has shown in a hearing that the vehicle or remnant part was placed on such property without the landowner's consent or acquiescence.

B. Costs of administration for the removal and disposal of vehicles or remnant parts may be recovered according to the lien and personal obligation provisions of Title 23. (Ord. 12024 § 9, 1995).

**23.10.120 Photographic record.** The county shall maintain a photographic record of all abated vehicles for a period of two years following adoption of Ordinance 12024. At the conclusion of the two year period, a written report along with copies of the photographs shall be transmitted to the council on the implementation of Ordinance 12024. (Ord. 12024 § 14, 1995).

**Chapter 23.20  
CITATIONS****Sections:**

- 23.20.010 Authority.
- 23.20.020 Effect.
- 23.20.030 Contents.
- 23.20.040 Revocation.
- 23.20.050 Remedy - civil fines.

**23.20.010 Authority.** Whenever a director has determined, based on investigation of documents and/or physical evidence, that a civil code violation has occurred, the director may issue a citation to any person responsible for code compliance. The director shall make a determination whether or not to issue a citation within sixty days of receiving a complaint alleging a violation or otherwise discovering that a violation may potentially exist. Subsequent complaints shall be treated as new complaints for purposes of this section. (Ord. 13263 § 15, 1998).

**23.20.020 Effect.**

A. Subject to the appeal provisions of K.C.C. chapter 23.36, a citation represents a determination that a civil code violation has occurred and that the cited party is a person responsible for code compliance.

B. Subject to the provisions of K.C.C. 23.02.130, a citation subjects the person responsible for code compliance to the civil fine prescribed by K.C.C. chapter 23.32.

C. Subject to the provisions of K.C.C. 23.02.130, the person responsible for code compliance shall either pay the civil fine assessed within twenty-one days of the date of issuance of the citation or appeal the citation according to the procedures described in K.C.C. chapter 23.36.

D. Failure to appeal the citation within twenty-one days shall render the citation a final determination that the conditions described in the citation existed and constituted a civil code violation and that the cited party is liable as a person responsible for code compliance.

E. Imposition of a civil fine creates a joint and several personal obligation in all persons responsible for code compliance who are served with notice of the violation. The prosecuting attorney on behalf of King County may collect the civil fines assessed by any appropriate legal means.

F. Issuance of a citation in no way limits a director's authority to issue a notice and order or stop work order to the same person responsible for code compliance pursuant to this title. Payment of the civil fine assessed under the citation does not relieve a person responsible for code compliance of his or her duty to correct the violation and/or to pay any and all civil penalties accruing under a notice and order or stop work order issued pursuant to this title. (Ord. 13263 § 16, 1998).

**23.20.030 Contents.** The citation shall include all of the following information:

- A. Identification of the location of the violation;
- B. A brief description of the violation or violations found;
- C. A statement of the specific ordinance, resolution, regulation, public rule, permit condition, notice and order provision, or stop work order provision that was violated;

D. A statement that the citation represents a determination that a civil code violation has occurred and that the cited party is subject to civil fines;

E. A statement of the amount of the civil fine assessed and that the fine must be paid within twenty-one days;

F. A statement of the options provided in this title for responding to the citation and the procedures necessary to exercise these options;

G. A statement that failure to appeal the citation within twenty-one days renders the citation a final determination that the conditions described in the citation existed and constituted a civil code violation and that the cited party is liable as a person responsible for code compliance; and

H. A statement advising that a failure to respond or appeal may be referred to the prosecuting attorney for prosecution. (Ord. 13263 § 17, 1998).

**23.20.040 Revocation.** A director may revoke or modify a citation issued under this title if the original citation was issued in error or if a party to a citation was incorrectly named. Such revocation or modification shall identify the reasons and underlying facts for revocation. (Ord. 13263 § 18, 1998).

**23.20.050 Remedy - civil fines.** A citation shall carry a civil fine to be determined with reference to the schedule contained in K.C.C. chapter 23.32. The payment of civil fines does not relieve a person responsible for code compliance of any obligation to cure, abate or stop a violation. (Ord. 13263 § 19, 1998).

## Chapter 23.24 NOTICE AND ORDERS

### Sections:

- 23.24.010 Authority.
- 23.24.020 Effect.
- 23.24.030 Contents.
- 23.24.040 Recording.
- 23.24.050 Supplementation, revocation, modification.
- 23.24.060 Administrative conference.
- 23.24.070 Remedies - civil penalties - authority and general provisions.
- 23.24.080 Remedies - community service.
- 23.24.090 Remedies - cost recovery.
- 23.24.100 Remedies - suspension, revocation or limitation of permit.
- 23.24.110 Remedies - denial of permit
- 23.24.120 Remedies - abatement - authorized.
- 23.24.130 Remedies - abatement cost recovery.
- 23.24.140 Code compliance and abatement fund - authorized.

**23.24.010 Authority.** Whenever a director has reason to believe, based on investigation of documents and/or physical evidence, that a civil code violation exists or has occurred, or that the civil code violations cited in a citation have not been corrected, or that the terms of a voluntary compliance agreement have not been met, the director is authorized to issue a notice and order to any person responsible for code compliance. The director shall make a determination whether or not to issue a notice and order within one hundred



twenty days of receiving a complaint alleging a violation or otherwise discovering that a violation may potentially exist, or within thirty days of the end of a voluntary compliance agreement time period which has not been met. Subsequent complaints shall be treated as new complaints for purposes of this section. Issuance of a citation is not a condition precedent to the issuance of a notice and order. (Ord. 13263 § 20, 1998).

**23.24.020 Effect.**

A. Subject to the appeal provisions of K.C.C. chapter 23.36, a notice and order represents a determination that a civil code violation has occurred, that the cited party is a person responsible for code compliance, and that the violations set out in the notice and order require the assessment of penalties and costs and other remedies specified in the notice and order.

B. Failure to correct the civil code violation in the manner prescribed by the notice and order subjects the person to whom the notice and order is directed to the use of any of the compliance remedies provided by this title, including:

1. Additional civil penalties and costs;
2. A requirement that abatement, remediation and/or mitigation be performed;
3. an agreement to perform community service as prescribed by this chapter;
4. permit suspension, revocation, modification and/or denial as prescribed by this chapter;

and/or

5. abatement by a director and recovery of the costs of abatement according to the procedures described in this chapter.

C. Any person identified in the notice and order as responsible for code compliance may appeal the notice and order within twenty-one days according to the procedures described in K.C.C. chapter 23.36.

D. Failure to appeal the notice and order within the applicable time limits shall render the notice and order a final determination that the conditions described in the notice and order existed and constituted a civil code violation, and that the named party is liable as a person responsible for code compliance.

E. Issuance of a notice and order in no way limits a director's authority to issue a citation or stop work order to a person previously cited through the notice and order process pursuant to this title. Payment of the civil penalties assessed under the notice and order does not relieve a person found to be responsible for code compliance of his or her duty to correct the violation and/or to pay any and all civil fines or penalties accruing under citations or stop work orders issued pursuant to this title. (Ord. 13263 § 21, 1998).

**23.24.030 Contents.** The notice and order shall contain the following information:

- A. The address, when available, or location of the civil code violation;
- B. A legal description of the real property or the King County tax parcel number where the violation occurred or is located, or a description identifying the property by commonly used locators;
- C. A statement that the director has found the named person to have committed a civil code violation and a brief description of the violation or violations found;

- D. A statement of the specific provisions of the ordinance, resolution, regulation, public rule, permit condition, notice and order provision or stop work order that was or is being violated;
- E. The dollar amount of the civil penalty per separate violation;
- F. A statement advising that any costs of enforcement that exceed the amount of the penalty may also be assessed against the person to whom the notice and order is directed;
- G. A statement advising that the notice and order will be recorded against the property in the King County office of records and elections subsequent to service;
- H. A statement of the corrective or abatement action required to be taken and that all required permits to perform the corrective action must be obtained from the proper issuing agency;
- I. A statement advising that, if any required work is not commenced or completed within the time specified by the notice and order, a director may proceed to abate the violation and cause the work to be done and charge the costs thereof as a lien against the property and as a joint and several personal obligation of any persons responsible for code compliance;
- J. A statement advising that, if any assessed penalty, fee or cost is not paid on or before the due date, a director may charge the unpaid amount as a lien against the property where the civil code violation occurred if owned by a person responsible for code compliance and as a joint and several personal obligation of all persons responsible for code compliance;
- K. A statement advising that any person named in the notice and order or having any record or equitable title in the property against which the notice and order is recorded may appeal from the notice and order to the hearing examiner within fourteen days of the date of service of the notice and order;
- L. A statement advising that a failure to correct the violations cited in the notice and order could lead to the denial of subsequent King County permit applications on the subject property;
- M. A statement advising that a failure to appeal the notice and order within the applicable time limits renders the notice and order a final determination that the conditions described in the notice and order existed and constituted a civil code violation, and that the named party is liable as a person responsible for code compliance; and
- N. A statement advising the person responsible for code compliance of his or her duty to notify the director of any actions taken to achieve compliance with the notice and order. (14309 § 5, 2002: Ord. 13263 § 22, 1998).

**23.24.040 Recording.**

- A. Whenever a notice and order is served on a person responsible for code compliance, the director shall record a copy of the notice and order with the King County records and elections division, or its successor agency.
- B. When all violations specified in the notice and order have been corrected or abated, the director shall record a certificate of compliance with the King County records and elections division, or its successor agency. The certificate shall include a legal description of the property where the violation occurred and shall state that any unpaid civil penalties for which liens have been recorded are still outstanding and continue as liens on the property. (Ord. 14176 § 5, 2001: Ord. 13263 § 23, 1998).

**23.24.050 Supplementation, revocation, modification.**

A. Whenever there is new information or a change in circumstances, a director may add to, rescind in whole or part or otherwise modify a notice and order by issuing a supplemental notice and order. The supplemental notice and order shall be governed by the same procedures applicable to all notice and orders contained in this title.

B. A director may revoke or modify a notice and order issued under this title if the original notice and order was issued in error or if a party to an order was incorrectly named. The revocation or modification shall identify the reasons and underlying facts for revocation and shall be recorded with the King County records and elections division, or its successor agency. (Ord. 14176 § 6, 2001; Ord. 13263 § 24, 1998).

**23.24.060 Administrative conference.** An informal administrative conference may be conducted by a director at any time for the purpose of facilitating communication among concerned persons and providing a forum for efficient resolution of any violation. Interested parties shall not unreasonably be excluded from such conferences. (Ord. 13263 § 25, 1998).

**23.24.070 Remedies - civil penalties - authority and general provisions.**

A. Failure to correct a civil code violation in the manner and within the time frame specified by the notice and order subjects the person responsible for code compliance to civil penalties calculated with reference to the schedule contained in K.C.C. chapter 23.32.

B. Civil penalties assessed create a joint and several personal obligation in all persons responsible for code compliance. The prosecuting attorney on behalf of King County may collect the civil penalties assessed by any appropriate legal means.

C. Civil penalties assessed also authorize King County to take a lien for the value of civil penalties imposed against the real property of the person responsible for code compliance.

D. The payment of penalties does not relieve a person responsible for code compliance of any obligation to cure, abate or stop a violation. (Ord. 13263 § 26, 1998).

**23.24.080 Remedies - community service.** A director is authorized to allow a person responsible for code compliance who accumulates civil penalties as the result of a notice and order to voluntarily participate in community service projects in lieu of paying all or a portion of the assessed civil penalties. Community service may include, but is not limited to, abatement, restoration or education programs. The amount of community service will reasonably relate to the comparable value of penalties assessed against the violator. The director shall take into consideration the severity of the violation, any history of previous violations and practical and legal impediments in considering whether to allow community service in lieu of paying penalties. (Ord. 13263 § 27, 1998).

**23.24.090 Remedies - cost recovery.**

A. In addition to the other remedies available under this title, a director may charge the costs of pursuing code compliance and abatement incurred to correct a code violation to the person responsible for code compliance, including legal and incidental expenses to the extent these costs exceed the amount of the penalty paid. Such costs are due and payable thirty days from mailing of the invoice.

B. For purposes of this section, "legal and incidental expenses" shall include but are not limited to:

1. personnel costs, both direct and indirect, including attorney's fees and costs incurred to document the violation as soon as the violation occurs;
2. hauling, storage and disposal expenses;
3. Actual expenses and costs of the county in preparing notices, specifications and contracts and in accomplishing or contracting and inspecting the work and the costs of any required printing or mailing; and
4. Interest on the costs of abatement incurred by the county.

C. All costs assessed by the county in pursuing code compliance and/or abatement create a joint and several personal obligation in all persons responsible for code compliance. The prosecuting attorney on behalf of King County may collect the costs of code compliance efforts by any appropriate legal means.

D. King County may take a lien for the value of the costs of pursuing code compliance against the real property of the person responsible for code compliance. (Ord. 13263 § 28, 1998).

**23.24.100 Remedies - suspension, revocation or limitation of permit.**

A. A director may suspend, revoke or limit any permit issued by such director whenever:

1. the permit holder has committed a code violation in the course of performing activities subject to that permit;
2. the permit holder has interfered with a director in the performance of his or her duties relating to that permit;
3. the permit was issued in error or on the basis of materially incorrect information supplied to the county;
4. permit fees or costs were paid to the county by check and returned from a financial institution marked non-sufficient funds (NSF) or canceled; or
5. for a permit or approval that is subject to sensitive area review, the applicant has failed to disclose a change of circumstances on the development proposal site which materially affects an applicant's ability to meet the permit or approval conditions or which makes inaccurate the sensitive area study that was the basis for establishing permit or approval conditions.

B. Such suspension, revocation or modification shall be carried out through the notice and order provisions of this chapter and shall be effective upon the compliance date established by the notice and order. Such revocation, suspension or cancellation may be appealed to the hearing examiner using the appeal provisions of this title.

C. Notwithstanding any other provision of this title, a director may immediately suspend operations under any permit by issuing a stop work order pursuant to K.C.C. chapter 23.28. (Ord. 13263 § 29, 1998).

**23.24.110 Remedies - denial of permit.**

A. The county may deny a development proposal permit, when, with regard to the site or project for which the permit application is submitted:

1. any person has been found in violation and remains in violation of any ordinance, resolution, regulation or public rule of the county that regulates or protects the public health or the use and development of land or water, whether or not such ordinance, resolution, regulation or public rule is codified;

2. any person has been found in violation and remains in violation of the conditions of any permit, notice and order or stop work order issued pursuant to any such ordinance, resolution, regulation or public rule; and/or

3. for any property which has been found in violation and remains in violation of K.C.C. chapters 21.54 or 21A.24 or of any rule, permit, approval, order, easement, plan or agreement issued thereunder.

B. In order to further the remedial purposes of this title, such denial may continue until the violation is cured by restoration accepted as complete by the county and by payment of any civil penalty imposed for the violation, except that permits or approvals shall be granted to the extent necessary to accomplish any required restoration or cure.

C. For the purposes of this section, "found in violation" means:

1. that a citation, notice and order or stop work order has been issued and not timely appealed;  
or

2. that a voluntary compliance agreement has been entered into; or

3. that the hearing examiner has determined that the violation has occurred and such determination has not been stayed or reversed on appeal. (Ord. 13263 § 30, 1998).

**23.24.120 Remedies - abatement - authorized.** In addition to or as an alternative to any other judicial or administrative remedy, a director may use the notice and order provisions of this title to order any person responsible for code compliance to abate the violation and to complete the work at such time and under such conditions as a director determines reasonable under the circumstances. If the required corrective work is not commenced or completed within the time specified, a director may proceed to abate the violation. (Ord. 13263 § 31, 1998).

**23.24.130 Remedies - abatement cost recovery.**

A. Abatement costs may be recovered pursuant to this chapter.

B. The director shall keep an itemized account of costs incurred by the county in the abatement of any violation under this title. Upon completion of any abatement work, the director shall prepare a report specifying a legal description of the real property where the abatement work occurred, the work done for each property, the itemized costs of the work, including legal and incidental expenses, and interest accrued. (Ord. 13263 § 32, 1998).

**23.24.140 Code compliance and abatement fund - authorized.** All moneys collected from the assessment of civil penalties, from the recovery of the costs of pursuing code compliance and abatement, and from the recovery of abatement costs, both retroactively and prospectively, except those moneys designated for the Sensitive Areas Mitigation Fund as set forth in K.C.C. chapter 21A.24, shall be allocated to support expenditures for abatement and code enforcement administrative costs, including, but not limited to, personnel costs, and shall be accounted for through either creation of a fund or other appropriate accounting mechanism in the department issuing the notice and order under which the abatement occurred. (Ord. 14526 § 4, 2002 [expires January 1, 2004]; Ord. 13263 § 33, 1998).



## **Chapter 23.28 STOP WORK ORDERS**

### **Sections:**

- 23.28.010 Authorized.
- 23.28.020 Effect.
- 23.28.030 Remedy - civil penalties.

**23.28.010 Authorized.** A director is authorized to issue a stop work order to a person responsible for code compliance. Issuance of a citation or a notice and order is not a condition precedent to the issuance of the stop work order. (Ord. 13263 § 34, 1998).

#### **23.28.020 Effect.**

A. A stop work order represents a determination that a civil code violation has occurred and that any work or activity that is causing or contributing to the violation on the property where the violation has occurred or is occurring must cease.

B. A stop work order requires the immediate cessation of the specified work or activity on the named property. Work or activity may not resume unless specifically authorized by the director issuing the stop work order.

C. A stop work order may be appealed according to the procedures prescribed by K.C.C. chapter 23.36.

D. Failure to appeal the stop work order within the applicable time limits renders the stop work order a final determination that the civil code violation occurred and that work was properly ordered to cease.

E. Failure to comply with the terms of a stop work order subjects the person responsible for code compliance to civil penalties and costs. (Ord. 13263 § 35, 1998).

#### **23.28.030 Remedy - civil penalties.**

A. In addition to any other judicial or administrative remedy, a director may assess civil penalties for the violation of any stop work order according to the civil penalty schedule established in K.C.C. chapter 23.32.

B. Civil penalties for the violation of any stop work order shall begin to accrue on the first day the stop work order is violated and shall cease on the day the work is actually stopped.

C. Violation of a stop work order shall be a separate violation from any other civil code violation. Civil penalties assessed create a joint and several personal obligation in all persons responsible for code compliance. The prosecuting attorney on behalf of King County may collect the civil penalties assessed by any appropriate legal means.

D. Civil penalties assessed also authorize King County to take a lien for the value of civil penalties imposed against the real property of the person responsible for code compliance. (Ord. 13263 § 36, 1998).

**Chapter 23.32**  
**CIVIL FINES AND CIVIL PENALTIES**

**Sections:**

- 23.32.010 Assessment schedule.
- 23.32.020 Civil penalty - definitions.
- 23.32.030 Duty to comply.
- 23.32.040 Civil penalty - sensitive areas.
- 23.32.050 Waivers.

**23.32.010 Assessment schedule.**

A.1. Civil fines and civil penalties for civil code violations shall be imposed for remedial purposes and shall be assessed for each violation identified in a citation, notice and order, voluntary compliance agreement or stop work order pursuant to the following schedule:

## a. Citations

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| (1) With no previous similar code violations                | \$100                                   |
| (2) With one or more previous similar code violations       | \$500                                   |
| (3) With two or more previous violations of K.C.C. Title 10 | Double the rate of the previous penalty |

## b. Violation of Notice and Orders and Stop Work Orders

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| (1) Stop work order basic penalty   | \$500 |
| (2) Voluntary compliance agreement and notice and order basic penalty                       | \$25  |
| (3) Additional initial penalties may be added in the following amounts for violations where |       |

there is:

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| (a) public health risk                                   | \$15 |
| (b) environmental damage risk                            | \$15 |
| (c) damage to property risk                              | \$15 |
| (d) one previous similar code violation                  | \$25 |
| (e) two previous similar code violations                 | \$50 |
| (f) three or more previous similar code violations       | \$75 |
| (g) economic benefit to person responsible for violation | \$25 |

2. For the purposes of this section, previous similar code violations that can serve as a basis for a higher level of civil penalties include violations of the same chapter of the King County Code. Any stop work order or notice and order previously issued by the department shall not constitute a previous code violation for the purposes of this section if that stop work order or notice and order was appealed and subsequently reversed.

B. The penalties assessed pursuant to this section for any failure to comply with a notice and order or voluntary compliance agreement shall be assessed daily, according to the schedule in subsection A of this section, for the first thirty days following the date the notice and order or voluntary compliance agreement required the code violations to have been cured. If after thirty days the person responsible for code compliance has failed to satisfy the notice and order or voluntary compliance agreement, penalties shall be assessed daily at a rate of double the rate for the first thirty days. Penalties may be assessed daily until the person responsible for code compliance has fully complied with the notice and order.

C. Penalties based on violation of a stop work order shall be assessed, according to the schedule in subsection A of this section, for each day the department determines that work or activity was done in violation of the stop work order.



D. Citations shall be subject to a one-time penalty only.

E. The director may suspend the imposition of additional civil penalties if the person responsible for code compliance has entered into a voluntary compliance agreement. If the person responsible for code compliance enters into a voluntary compliance agreement and cures the code violations, the director may also waive all or part of the accrued civil penalties in accordance with K.C.C. 23.32.050. Penalties shall begin to accrue again pursuant to the terms of the voluntary compliance agreement if any necessary permits applied for are denied, canceled or not pursued, or if corrective action identified in the voluntary compliance agreement is not completed as specified. (Ord. 14309 § 6, 2002; Ord. 13263 § 37, 1998).

**23.32.020 Civil penalty - definitions.** For the purposes of assessing civil fines and penalties, "found in violation" means that:

- A. A citation, notice and order or stop work order has been issued and not timely appealed; or
- B. A voluntary compliance agreement has been entered into; or
- C. The hearing examiner has determined that the violation has occurred and such determination has not been stayed or reversed on appeal. (Ord. 13263 § 38, 1998).

**23.32.030 Duty to comply.** A. Persons responsible for code compliance have a duty to notify the director of any actions taken to achieve compliance with the notice and order. For purposes of assessing civil penalties, a violation shall be considered ongoing until the person responsible for code compliance has come into compliance with the notice and order, voluntary compliance agreement, or stop work order and has notified the director of this compliance. (Ord. 13263 § 39, 1998).

**23.32.040 Civil penalty - sensitive areas**

A. The code compliance provisions for sensitive areas are intended to encourage compliance with K.C.C. chapters 21.54 and 21A.24, to protect sensitive areas and the general public from harm and to further the remedial purposes of this title. To achieve this, persons responsible for code compliance will not only be required to restore damaged sensitive areas, insofar as that is possible and beneficial, but will also be required to pay a civil penalty for the redress of ecological, recreation, and economic values lost or damaged due to their unlawful action.

B. The provisions in this section are in addition to and not in lieu of any other penalty, sanction or right of action provided by law for other related violations.

C. Where feasible, the owner of the land on which the violation occurred shall be named as a party to the notice and order. In addition to any other persons who may be liable for a violation, and subject to the exceptions provided in K.C.C. 23.02.130, the owner shall be jointly and severally liable for the restoration of a site and payment of any civil penalties imposed.

D. For the purposes of this section, violation of the sensitive area ordinance means:

1. the violation of any provision of K.C.C. chapters 21.54 or 21A.24 or of the administrative rules promulgated thereunder;
2. the failure to obtain a permit required for work in a sensitive area; or
3. the failure to comply with the conditions of any permit, approval, terms and conditions of any sensitive area tract or setback area, easement or other covenant, plat restriction or binding assurance or any notice and order, stop work order, mitigation plan, contract or agreement issued or concluded pursuant to the above-mentioned provisions.

E. Any person in violation of the sensitive areas ordinance may be subject to civil penalties, costs and fees assessed as follows:

1. according to the civil penalty schedule included in this chapter of this title, provided that the exact amount of the penalty per violation shall be determined by the department based on the physical extent and severity of the violation; or
2. the greater of
  - a. an amount determined to be equivalent to the economic benefit that the person responsible for code compliance derives from the violation measured as the total of:
    - 1) the resulting increase in market value of the property;
    - 2) the value received by the person responsible for code compliance; and
    - 3) the savings of construction costs realized by the person responsible for code compliance as a result of performing any act in violation of the chapter; or
  - b. code compliance costs (such amount not to exceed \$25,000.00) incurred by the county to enforce K.C.C. 21.54 and/or K.C.C. 21A.24 against the person responsible for code compliance. (Ord. 13263 § 40, 1998).

**23.32.050 Waivers.**

A. Civil fines and civil penalties, in whole or in part, may be waived or reimbursed to the payer by the director, with the concurrence of the director of the department of finance, under the following circumstances:

1. The citation, notice and order or stop work order was issued in error;
2. The civil fines or civil penalties were assessed in error; or
3. Notice failed to reach the property owner due to unusual circumstances.

B. Civil fines and civil penalties, in whole or in part, may be waived by the director, with the concurrence of the director of the department of finance or its successor agency, under the following circumstances:

1. The code violations have been cured under a voluntary compliance agreement;
2. The code violations which formed the basis for the civil penalties have been cured, and the director finds that compelling reasons justify waiver of all or part of the outstanding civil penalties; or
3. Other information warranting waiver has been presented to the director since the citation, notice and order or stop work order was issued.

C. The director shall document the circumstances under which a decision was made to waive penalties and such a statement shall become part of the public record unless privileged. (Ord. 14309 § 7, 2002: Ord. 13263 § 41, 1998).

**Chapter 23.36**  
**APPEALS AND JUDICIAL ENFORCEMENT**

**Sections:**

- 23.36.010 Administrative appeal - filing requirements.
- 23.36.020 Administrative appeal - procedures.
- 23.36.030 Administrative appeal - final order.
- 23.36.040 Judicial enforcement - petition for enforcement.
- 23.36.050 Judicial enforcement - limitation on defenses.

**23.36.010 Administrative appeal - filing requirements.**

A. Any person issued a citation or named in a notice and order or stop work order and any owner of the land where the violation for which a citation, notice and order or stop work order is issued occurred and any complainant who is an aggrieved person pursuant to K.C.C. Title 20 and requests to be kept advised pursuant to K.C.C. 23.02.070H may file a notice of appeal of a citation, notice and order, stop work order, determination to enter into a voluntary compliance agreement or a determination not to issue a citation or order within fourteen days of the service of the citation, notice and order or stop work order with the issuing department.

B. If a notice of appeal has been filed within the time period provided herein, the appellant shall file a statement of appeal within twenty-one days of the service of the citation, notice and order or stop work order with the issuing department.

C. Any person named in a citation may appeal the citation by signing the citation, indicating on the citation that a hearing is requested, and returning the citation to the issuing agency or department within twenty-one days of its service.

D. A notice of appeal shall comply with the form, content and service requirements of K.C.C. chapters 20.20 and 20.24 and rules promulgated thereunder. (14309 § 8, 2002: Ord. 13263 § 43, 1998).

**23.36.020 Administrative appeal - procedures.**

A. The appeal hearing shall be conducted as provided for in K.C.C. chapter 20.24, except that where specific provisions in this title conflict with K.C.C. chapter 20.24, the provisions of this title shall govern.

B. Enforcement of any notice and order of a director issued pursuant to this title shall be stayed as to the appealing party during the pendency of any administrative appeal under this title, except when a director determines that the violation poses a significant threat of immediate and/or irreparable harm and so states in any notice and order issued.

C. Enforcement of any stop work order of a director issued pursuant to this title shall not be stayed during the pendency of any administrative appeal under this title.

D. When multiple citations, stop work orders, or notices and orders have been issued simultaneously for any set of facts constituting a violation, only one appeal of all the enforcement actions shall be allowed. (Ord. 13263 § 44, 1998).

**23.36.030 Administrative appeal - final order.**

A. Following review of the evidence submitted, the hearing examiner shall make written findings and conclusions and shall affirm or modify the citation, notice and order or stop work order previously issued if the examiner finds that a violation has occurred. The examiner shall uphold the appeal and reverse the citation or order if the examiner finds that no violation has occurred.

B. If an owner of property where a violation has occurred has affirmatively demonstrated that the violation was caused by another person or entity not the agent of the property owner and without the property owner's knowledge or consent, such property owner shall be responsible only for abatement of the violation. Strict compliance with permit requirements may be waived regarding the performance of such an abatement in order to avoid doing substantial injustice to a non-culpable property owner.

C. The hearing examiner's final order shall be final and conclusive unless proceedings for review of the decision are properly commenced in superior court within the time period specified by state law.

D. A final order by the hearing examiner affirming or reinstating a citation, notice and order or stop work order renders such citation, notice and order or stop work order a final agency order. (Ord. 13263 § 45, 1998).

**23.36.040 Judicial enforcement - petition for enforcement.**

A. In addition to any other judicial or administrative remedy, the prosecuting attorney on behalf of King County may seek enforcement of a director's order by filing a petition for enforcement in King County superior court.

B. The petition must name as respondent each alleged person against whom the director seeks to obtain civil enforcement.

C. A petition for civil enforcement may request monetary relief, declaratory relief, temporary or permanent injunctive relief and other civil remedy provided by law, or any combination of the foregoing. (Ord. 13263 § 46, 1998).

**23.36.050 Judicial enforcement - limitation on defenses.** A respondent in a proceeding by petition for enforcement may not assert as a defense any fact or issue that the respondent had an opportunity to assert before the hearing examiner and did not, or upon which the final determination of the hearing examiner was adverse to the respondent. (Ord. 13263 § 47, 1998).

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(King County 3-2002)

## Chapter 23.40 LIENS

### Sections:

- 23.40.010 Filing and contents.
- 23.40.020 Supplemental.
- 23.40.030 Abatement lien - tax bill authorized.
- 23.40.040 Limitation of action - duration.

#### **23.40.010 Filing and contents.**

A. Within ninety days from the date any civil penalty, civil fine, abatement cost, or enforcement cost is due pursuant to this title, a director may record a lien against the property of a person responsible for code compliance for the amount owing with the King County records and elections division, or its successor agency.

B. The lien shall contain the following information:

1. The King County Code provision;
2. A brief description of the violation and its duration at the date of recording;
3. A brief description of the abatement work done, if any, and who performed the abatement work;
4. The owner of the property, if known, or a statement that the owner is not known;
5. A legal description of the property;
6. The amount of penalties, fines or costs that are owing; and
7. A sworn statement signed by a director that the director believes the claim is just. (Ord. 14176 § 7, 2001: Ord. 13263 § 48, 1998).

**23.40.020 Lien - supplemental.** A director may record supplemental liens with the King County records and elections division, or its successor agency, to update information regarding penalties, fines, costs or fees contained in any existing lien. (Ord. 14176 § 8, 2001: Ord. 13263 § 49, 1998).

#### **23.40.030 Abatement lien - tax bill authorized.**

A. The metropolitan King County council finds that there exist within the unincorporated areas of the county dwellings that are unfit for human habitation, and buildings, structures and premises or portions thereof that are unfit for other uses due to conditions that are inimical to the health and welfare of county residents.

B. In the case of such unfit dwellings, buildings, structures, and premises or portions thereof, a director, as an alternative to any other remedy provided in this title, may have abatement costs certified, entered and collected by the King County finance division as taxes according to the procedures and limitations set forth in RCW 35.80.030. (Ord. 13263 § 50, 1998).

**23.40.040 Lien - limitation of action - duration.**

A. No lien created by this title binds the property subject to the lien for a period longer than three years after the lien claim has been recorded, unless an action to enforce that lien is commenced in the proper court within three years after the recording.

B. When all penalties or abatement costs, or both, assessed against the property owner have been paid, the director shall expeditiously record a satisfaction of lien with the King County records and elections division, or its successor agency. The satisfaction shall include a legal description of the property where the violation occurred. (Ord. 14176 § 9, 2001: Ord. 13263 § 51, 1998).

**Chapter 23.99  
MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

**Sections:**

23.99.010 Grammatical construction.

23.99.050 Severability.

**23.99.010 Grammatical construction.** Unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, words in any tense shall include the present, past and future tense. (Ord. 13263 § 55, 1998).

**23.99.050 Severability.** Should any section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this title be declared unconstitutional or invalid or unenforceable for any reason, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this title which will remain in full force and effect. (Ord. 13263 § 56, 1998).